REMARKS

Claims 1-25 stand rejected. Claims 25-43 have been added to further define the invention. As a result, claims 1-43 are pending for examination with claim 1, 12, 18, 25, 34 and 39 being independent claims. The amendments made and the new claims added find support in the specification, and do not constitute new matter.

Applicants thank the examiner for conducting the telephonic interview of September 21, 2004, with the Applicant's attorney. During that interview the examiner indicated that removing the previously added server limitation in independent claims 1, 12 and 18 would help claim clarity. The examiner also indicated that clarifying that the notification occurs automatically would help distinguish the invention over the prior art.

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Steele et al. (U.S. Patent 6,065,051) in view of Hodges et al. (U.S. Patent 6,449,365). The Examiner states that "it would have been obvious for one of the ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Steele by implementing the step of communicating a client to client message as taught by Hodges because doing so would allow a user in a group to update information on a data server and notify the other clients that the data has been updated in real time using client to client messages."

Applicants have amended Claim 1 to call for:

> "Communicating a fact that the data available on
> the data source has been updated by
> automatically communicating a client to client
> message from the one client computer that
> updated the data to other client computers
> thereby prompting said other client computers

to <u>automatically</u> access the updated data from the data source." (underlining added for emphasis)

Applicants submit that the invention as claimed in Claim 1 is neither taught, described nor suggested in Steele et al., even in view of Hodges et al..

The present invention provides: "<u>client computers</u> 115, 116,117, 118." (page 5, line18) Where "<u>Use of a separate, multi-client, real-time update protocol allows the clients 115, 116, 117,118 to notify the other clients when they make a change to the database</u> stored on the database server 104. The IRC protocol (Internet Relay Chat) which was originally designed for text chat, is the preferred means of messaging the other clients 115,116,117,118. When a client makes a change to the database, the client first updates the database. Synchronization facilities in the database management software running on the database server 104 ensure orderly updating of the information in the database. The client then sends a change notification to a real-time channel that is implemented by means of an IRC server 110. All the other clients that are currently on-line monitor notices from the IRC server 110 and update their local information appropriately by making an update request from the HTTP server 106 for updated data from the database server 104." (page 6, lines 10-21) (underlining added for emphasis)

Hodges et al., on the other hand provides "The NMCCC interface screen 800 also includes a <u>Distribution list button</u> 860. Assume that the user selects this button. The editor on NMCCC workstation 110 then loads a Distribution List screen that includes an Email Group field and a Pager Group field. <u>The user may then select the email groups and/or pager groups to receive the notification message</u>. The email groups and pager groups correspond to the email and pager groups stored in databases 410 and 420 (FIG. 4)." (column 8, lines 18-26) (underlining added for emphasis)

Accordingly, the Applicants submit that Claim 1 is not unpatentable over Steele et al. in view of Hodges et al..

Claims 2-8 are dependent on Claim 1. As such, Claims 2-8 are believed allowable based upon Claim 1.

Claim 12 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Steele et al. (U.S. Patent 6,065,051) in view of Hodges et al. (U.S. Patent 6,449,365). The Examiner states that "Stele does not explicitly teach the limitation "communicating a message from one client computer to (sic.) plurality of computers". However Hodges teaches a method and apparatus for providing notification of network conditions and update where the user sends a client to client message to inform the other clients that an update has occurred on a server using a network management server."

Applicants have amended Claim 12 to call for:

"updating the data on the data source and
automatically communicating a fact that the data
available on the data source has been updated
by communicating an update message from said
one client computer to said plurality of client
computers automatically thereby prompting said
plurality of client computers to automatically
access the updated data from the data source."
(underlining added for emphasis)

Applicants have amended Claim 18 to call for:

"automatically updating the data on the server
computer and then automatically communicating
a fact that the data available on the server has .
been updated by communicating an update
message from said single client computer to said

plurality of client computers to thereby prompt
said plurality of client computers to
<u>automatically</u> access the updated data from the
server computer" (underlining added for
emphasis)

Applicants submit that the invention as claimed in Claims 12 and
18 is neither taught, described nor suggested in Steele et al., even in view
of Hodges et al..

The present invention provides for "client computers 115, 116,117,
118." (page 5, line18) Where "<u>use of a separate, multi-client, real-time</u>
<u>update protocol allows the clients 115, 116, 117,118 to notify the other</u>
<u>clients when they make a change to the database</u> stored on the database
server 104. The IRC protocol (Internet Relay Chat) which was originally
designed for text chat, is the preferred means of messaging the other
clients 115,116,117,118. When a client makes a change to the database,
the client first updates the database. Synchronization facilities in the
database management software running on the database server 104
ensure orderly updating of the information in the database. The client
then sends a change notification to a real-time channel that is
implemented by means of an IRC server 110. All the other clients that
are currently on-line monitor notices from the IRC server 110 and update
their local information appropriately by making an update request from
the HTTP server 106 for updated data from the database server 104."
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screen 800 also includes a <u>Distribution list button</u> 860. Assume that the
user selects this button. The editor on NMCCC workstation 110 then
loads a Distribution List screen that includes an Email Group field and a
Pager Group field. <u>The user may then select the email groups and/or</u>

<u>pager groups to receive the notification message</u>. The email groups and pager groups correspond to the email and pager groups stored in databases 410 and 420 (FIG. 4)." (column 8, lines 18-26) (underlining added for emphasis)

Accordingly, the Applicants submit that Claims 12 and 18 are not unpatentable over Steele et al. in view of Hodges et al..

Claims 13-17 are dependent on Claim 12. As such, Claims 13-17 are believed allowable based upon Claim 12.

Claims 19-24 are dependent on Claim 18. As such, Claims 19-24 are believed allowable based upon Claim 18.

CONCLUSION

Accordingly, in view of the above amendment and remarks it is submitted that the claims are patentably distinct over the prior art and that all the rejections to the claims have been overcome. Reconsideration and reexamination of the above Application is requested. Based on the foregoing, Applicants respectfully requests that pending claims 1-13 be allowed, and that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. If the Examiner believes, after this amendment, that the application is not in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the Applicant's attorney at the telephone number listed below.

If this response is not considered timely filed and if a request for an extension of time is otherwise absent, Applicant hereby requests any necessary extension of time. If there is a fee occasioned by this response, including an extension fee that is not covered by an enclosed check please charge any deficiency to Deposit Account No. 50-0463.

Respectfully submitted,
Microsoft Corporation

Date: _October 4, 2004_   By: _____

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Reply
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